

# BACONIANA

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VOL. XXIII. No. 89.

APRIL, 1938

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*Edited by Bertram G. Theobald and Francis E. C. Habgood, and published for the Bacon Society (Incorporated) by Wadsworth & Co., The Rydal Press, Keighley.*

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## EDITORIAL.

The death of Mr. Henry Seymour has resulted in a change in the editorship of BACONIANA. Mr. B. G. Theobald and Mr. F. E. C. Habgood have been appointed its joint editors by the Council. The editorial policy will remain unchanged. This is, the encouragement of the study of the works of Francis Bacon as philosopher, statesman, poet, and dramatist: his genius, character, and life: his personal influence upon his own time and that of his work upon to-day. Such influence the Society believes is, though three centuries old, as modern as the hour.

The editors desire to increase the circulation of BACONIANA and, with that object in view, are making arrangements for the inclusion of articles appealing to all those who, although they may not be acquainted with the Baconian case, are generally interested in the life and literature of Bacon's time. Articles involving original research and dealing with matters of more particular interest to the advanced student will also, of course, be included: these will be contributed by specialists in their particular subjects from time to time.

Contributions relating to any aspect of the Society's objects are invited and particularly reports of any matter relating thereto; the editors alone cannot hope to acquaint themselves with every item of interest to members of the Society reported in the Press or occurring from day to day.

The editors will also be grateful for suggestions for the improvement of *BACONIANA* with the object of extending its circulation and increasing its interest, and such will receive their careful consideration.

Lectures upon the work and objects of the Society can be arranged in London and the home counties, and if possible farther afield, if readers will acquaint the secretary with opportunities for these.

### THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY.

As the early issues of our journal are becoming increasingly scarce, we should be very glad if any members possessing copies which they can spare would be good enough to forward these to the Hon. Librarian, Mr. Percy Walters.

It is now almost impossible to make up complete sets, though this might still be done with the co-operation of our readers. The following numbers are especially needed:

Bacon Society Journal: Nos. 1, 8, 10, 11, 12.

*BACONIANA*: Nos. 1, 2.

*BACONIANA* ("New Series"): Nos. 1 to 22.

All issued prior to 1900.

The Librarian would be especially grateful for any copies of No. 2, April 1903, of which the Society has none remaining.

Many Baconians have expressed the wish that Canonbury Tower, Canonbury Square, N.1, should be more extensively used, and with this object in view, it has now been arranged that the Society's rooms will be open from 6 till 9 p.m. on the **THIRD THURSDAY IN EVERY MONTH**, when members and their friends can freely discuss among themselves matters of interest, and inspect the library.

### HOW TO GET THERE.

By car to Canonbury Square.

By Underground to Highbury and Islington Station.

By Bus No. 30 to Highbury Station.

By Buses Nos. 38, 38a, 67, 73, to corner of Canonbury Road and Essex Road, which is quite close to Canonbury Square.

By Bus No. 19 to corner of Canonbury Lane.

## OBITUARY.

Henry Seymour—æet: 78.

IT is with deep regret that we have to record the passing of our Hon. Secretary, Mr. Henry Seymour, on the 3rd February 1938 at the age of seventy-eight. The funeral took place on the 8th February at Finchley Cemetery and this was attended by members of the Council of the Bacon Society, who on behalf of all its members sent a wreath in token of his long and faithful service to them.

Mr. Seymour was a man of vigorous intellect, wide sympathies and varied activities. In his earlier days his energy found expression in social reform movements and in these he was associated with Charles Bradlaugh, Bernard Shaw and the original members of the Fabian Society, gaining wide experience in journalism, political life and commerce.

In business he was one of the pioneers of the gramophone industry, acting as the editor of the two principal Trade Journals *The Talking Machine* and *Sound Wave*. He was the author of a complete record of the Industry entitled "The Reproduction of Sound" which is acknowledged as the standard work on the subject.

Aviation was another of his interests: some fifty years ago he wrote "The Conquest of the Air" a book which attracted considerable attention at a time when people were very much less air-minded than they are to-day.

But it is of course as a member of the Bacon Society for more than twenty years that Mr. Seymour's work was most familiar to readers of BACONIANA. As has been said he acted as the Society's Hon. Secretary and was the Chief Editor of this journal. He contributed regularly to it under his own name articles relating to practically every aspect of the Society's work. He was responsible too for by far the greater part of the unsigned articles,



Notes and Notices, Reviews, etc. All showed his wide knowledge of his subject and ability to present it to readers in clear and attractive form. A great mass of correspondence from many parts of the world passed through his hands and his readiness to help enquirers, patient research and enlightening criticism will not be readily forgotten by members of the Society.

He was a master of the difficult and recondite subject of cryptography in its many branches. He was one of the few who made themselves really familiar with the Biliteral Cipher which Francis Bacon described in his "De Augmentis" 1623 and was one of the most doughty champions of the claims of Dr. O. Owen and Mrs. Gallup to have discovered such a cipher in the other works of Bacon and his "masks."

It may be said that in some respects Mr. Seymour was more iconoclast than reformer. His heterodox opinions, always fearlessly expressed, sometimes perhaps overstated, inevitably brought him into conflict with others: he hit hard but was as ready to receive as to give blows in the rough and tumble of controversy. He had an intense hatred of sham in whatever guise and was sincerity itself. If ever man meant what he said Mr. Seymour did. His energy and industry were unwearied to the end and his familiar personality will be greatly missed among Baconians, not only in England, but in many parts of the world.

## BACON'S VINDICATION.

By H. KENDRA BAKER.

**I**T is generally supposed that Spedding's "Evenings with a Reviewer" constitutes a "Vindication" of Francis Bacon's character for rectitude; but as a "Vindication" it leaves much to be desired.

So far as the "bribery" charges are concerned Spedding's conclusions are little more than an "Excuse for his guilt"; they cannot be regarded as "proof of his innocence."

Those who are concerned to show that Francis Bacon was a man of "clean hands and a clean heart" must beware lest in leaning upon Spedding they do but find him a broken reed.

It is to William Hepworth Dixon that the manifestation of Francis Bacon's complete innocence is due, and Baconians owe to him a deep debt of gratitude for raising the level of this great man's vindication from mere "extenuating circumstances" to a demonstration of stainless integrity. It was in consequence of Macaulay's grossly unjust review of Basil Montagu's "Life and Works of Francis Bacon" (1825/34), that Spedding wrote in 1845, his memorable Work, "Evenings with a Reviewer." In this, in the form of a dialogue between a reader and himself, he dissects Macaulay's statements and shows him to be prejudiced, politically biassed, and in many cases totally inaccurate. For some unknown reason this book, which was privately printed, was not published until 1881, after Spedding's death.

It is stated in the Dictionary of National Biography that it was never seen by Macaulay, who died in 1859. Spedding had, however, in his lifetime, published his monumental edition of Bacon's Works in 7 volumes, from 1857 to 1859; and, in as many volumes, "Lord Bacon's Letters and

Life," from 1861 to 1874. The latter, in an abridged form, appeared in 1878 in 2 volumes under the title of "The Life and Times of Francis Bacon," from which most of the original documents that interrupted the narrative have been omitted. His views and conclusions as appearing in both "The Letters and Life" and "The Life and Times" appear to be substantially the same as those expressed in his "Evenings with a Reviewer," which, as we have said, though written in 1845, had not yet been published. There are, however, a few footnotes and references which will be dealt with later in connection with Dixon's researches.

At the moment it will suffice to make it clear that Spedding's view, as contained in the "Evenings," showed no material change in either of his subsequent works. The significance of this will be apparent as we proceed.

And now we come to William Hepworth Dixon.

By profession a barrister, his qualifications peculiarly fitted him for research in those technical intricacies which might very well prove almost impenetrable and unintelligible to a layman. He was a trenchant writer and a formidable protagonist of any cause he espoused.

In 1854, the Dictionary of National Biography tells us, "Dixon began his researches in regard to Francis Bacon. He procured through the intervention of Lord Stanley and Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton leave to inspect the State Papers, *which had been hitherto jealously guarded from the general view by successive Secretaries of State.*"

We have italicised the latter passage in order to emphasise the fact that his researches were *new*.

He published, as the result of his researches, "The Personal History of Lord Bacon," in 1861, and a much augmented work, "The Story of Lord Bacon's Life" in 1862. "Dixon's books upon Bacon," says the D.N.B., "obtained wide popularity both at home and abroad, but have not been highly valued by subsequent investigators. (See Spedding's remarks in Bacon i, 386)."

Now, this disparaging qualification appears to be based solely on the one isolated remark of Spedding to which they refer, and from the following evidence it will be seen



that it is unwarrantable. First, let us make it clear that Spedding knew of Dixon's *Essay* (1861) prior to the publication of his "Letters and Life" (1861) for not only is it referred to in footnotes but also in the text. In Vol. I there are three indexed references in all, two in the text and one in the footnotes. It is to one of these textual allusions that the D.N.B. refers. At Vol. I, p. 386 (Letters and Life) he questions Dixon's conclusions as to the inferences concerning the Earl of Essex to be drawn from a certain Masque believed to have been written by Bacon. He is referring, be it noted, to the 1861 *Essay*, and it is significant that Dixon—as though anxious not to rely on any evidence that might be thought doubtful or questionable—omits all reference to such Masque in his subsequent *Book* (1862).

Now, the writer in the D.N.B. does not seem to have taken the trouble to refer to Spedding's "Life and Times" (1878); for had he done so he would have found that Spedding on his part had dropped his criticism concerning Dixon's "inferences," owing presumably to Dixon having omitted the passage from his later Work. Thus, in allowing this disparaging reference of Dixon to remain in the D.N.B., the writer betrays either his prejudice or his ignorance; in either case he betrays his inaccuracy.

It may be mentioned, too, that in Vol. II of the *Letters and Life* (1862) Spedding, referring to an incident in Essex's career which "popular narratives with one accord forget to mention," puts a footnote that "this was written before the appearance" of Dixon's *Essay* (1861), thereby excluding Dixon from this stricture. This "scienter" (as the Lawyers call it) on Spedding's part concerning Dixon's *Essay* as well as his subsequent book, has a very important bearing on the former's attitude towards Dixon, especially in view of the far-reaching results of Dixon's researches, and their effect on Spedding's conclusions.

That Dixon honestly, and modestly, tried to profit by the criticisms which his first effort, the "Essay" (1861) evoked, is shewn by what he says in the "Note" to his subsequent book, "The Story of Lord Bacon's Life" (1862). He writes:—

"The brief Essay on the Personal History of Lord Bacon was published about a year ago, and a second edition followed the first too quickly to allow of my profiting by the discussions to which it gave rise. In the wide and warm acceptance which it gained, an acceptance more immediate than I had dared to hope for, some critics said, most truly, that many things were left unexplained, particularly as to the Apology and the Confession." When, however, it appeared that nearly all objections to a true history of Bacon's life arose either from forgetfulness of what was otherwise known, or from carelessness in fitting the new matter to the old, and that these objections would vanish on the facts being set in their true order, it was clear that if some one "would tell the story of Bacon's life, in a brief space, and in such a way as to deal with all the facts under controversy, he would be doing a service. I had not sought this labour; circumstances thrust it on me. My Essay was reprinted in Boston and Leipsic. Requests were made to translate it into French, German, and Italian. A new Edition was called for in London. How could I give it to the world again without answering by facts the objections still urged against the nobler view of Bacon's life? Voices from many sides called on me to proceed in the work I had begun. The Hatfield Papers offered me much new detail on the Essex Plot, and the important discovery in the Six Clerks' Office of Bacon's Chancery-books, put me in possession of new and official materials for a history of the charges of Judicial Bribery. Finding my former case strengthened at every point by these revelations, I fell to work, cheerily obtained from Sir John Romilly free access to the Chancery-books, and from Mr. T. Duffus Hardy valuable aid in deciphering and abstracting them. I sought the advice and obtained the approval of some of the most eminent lawyers on the Bench. The result of these labours is now before the Reader."

This "nobler view of Bacon's life" of which he speaks is no less than the difference between "extenuation" and complete "exoneration," and it will thus be seen of what enormous value were Dixon's investigations. It will



also be seen that they were *new*, and that they were into *official records*. They cannot therefore be treated lightly. It would be impossible in a short article to indicate, even in outline, the scope of these investigations, nor is it proposed to attempt it.

Suffice it to say here that Spedding, when he wrote his "Evenings" must obviously have been unaware of a large mass of the evidence collected by Dixon as a result of his researches and as subsequently published and fully documented. In particular it would seem that Spedding could have had no knowledge whatever of the prevailing "fee-system"—the most essential feature of the whole situation—or he could never have made many of the statements he does. For example:—

"And though I admit that *his removal was necessary by his own fault* (our italics). I think no one will maintain that the affairs of the Nation went the better for his absence." (Vol. II, p. 249).

Dixon's researches show conclusively that such an "Admission" is wholly unwarrantable, and, so far as the subsequent "affairs of the Nation" are concerned, the reference is irrelevant to the issue, which is the innocence or guilt of the Chancellor.

The "Fee-System" which had existed from time immemorial, pernicious and objectionable as it undoubtedly was, was yet the only means by which "judges were paid their wages," as Alford stated in the House of Commons on the Debate. The receipt of these fees in the shape of "voluntary benevolences" (just as are Counsel's fees—in theory—to this day) was perfectly regular, so long as they were not paid and received *pendente lite*, which Dixon proves was not the case in the charges framed against Bacon.

Thus when Spedding "admits" Bacon's removal to have been due to his own "fault," he is both historically and ethically wrong, and no amount of "excuses" are either needful or relevant, for there is no "fault" to excuse.

Had he attacked the "fee-system," he would have been justified.

Again (p. 253) he regards Bacon's conduct as a "referee on the question of law" in the Mompesson affair (the granting of a license to Mompesson to manufacture gold thread) as "Strange and unaccountable."

The Records show that it was neither, but perfectly regular and in accordance with Bacon's plain duty to the King. He could not have acted otherwise without a breach of his official duties.

And then comes this passage (p. 257) A., quoting from Ma caulay, "In his judicial capacity—"

B. (that is, Spedding), "Stay; we are now coming to Bacon's real delinquency 'the little picture of night-work remaining among the fair and excellent tables of his acts and works'; *which he never himself affected to excuse, but penitently acknowledged the faults* (our italics) and submitted without a murmur to the very severe punishment with which they were visited. No true friend to his memory will affect to find him blameless here," &c.

Well, all we can say is that a very "true friend to his memory"—Hepworth Dixon, to wit—has not only "affected to find him blameless here," but has demonstrated the fact conclusively.

Spedding could never for one moment have considered the true implications of the erroneously so-called, "Confession and Submission" which does but admit the *abuses of the fee-system*, a system which Bacon had pledged himself to abolish—given time—among other prevailing abuses. What he thought of such a system is clearly indicated in his "New Atlantis," where the Perfect State is outlined. There is not a word in this "Confession" which can be justly construed as an acknowledgment of personal guilt, beyond, perhaps, the pathetic plea that amid the overwhelming responsibilities and labours of his High Office, he may not have adequately "overlooked" his subordinate officers—whose villainies, by the way, had brought these troubles upon him.

The "Submission" is shown to have been made at the urgent entreaty of his weak and ungrateful Monarch in order to spare his Favourite. What was demanded of

him was not a "Defence" but a "Submission," a "Sacrifice," not a "Vindication."

This the somewhat unimaginative Spedding seems to have been incapable of appreciating; but there is really very little excuse for him, seeing that, quite apart from the Evidence adduced by Dixon, the very facts set out in this so-called "Confession" speak for themselves to those who have eyes to see, and rebut all suggestions of personal guilt.

It is amazing that even on the evidence before him, Spedding could have used such expressions, especially as "the very severe punishment" was never exacted.

And here again, on p. 264:—A. (quoting again from Macaulay), "He and his dependents accepted large presents from persons who were engaged in Chancery suits."

B. "That at last is true; and I admit that it was a great fault."

Poor Spedding! "A great fault" to do what every Chancellor and Judge had done for centuries in accordance with the recognised "fee-system!" Had Spedding ever considered whence practically *all* public officials derived their emoluments—from the Archbishop and Lord Chancellor downwards?

There was no such thing as a Civil List in those days and everybody, as Dixon shows, subsisted on "voluntary benevolences."

We can hardly realise such a pernicious system in these days of State-paid officials, but, it was the prevailing—and only—system by which officials were paid in *those* days, and to speak of "a fault" under such circumstances is to betray a really reprehensible ignorance of the conditions of the period. That Bacon should be sacrificed on the altar of Reform for abuses which he had but inherited, was not only grossly unjust but was—as Dixon shows—solely due to the machinations of certain unscrupulous place-seekers who wanted not Reforms, but the Seals for their own purposes.

That the abuses which were made the pretext for Bacon's persecution were, in no particular, remedied after his "fall," but were in fact accentuated until these place-



seekers had met with their deserts, is clear evidence that Dixon's conclusions were well-founded, and that Speddings "admissions" and "excuses" were totally erroneous.

Let one or two more such extracts suffice.

p.288. "I hope it will appear that this page of his life was not one total blot, *however ineffaceable be the great blot which he suffered to fall upon it* (our italics).

p.289. "I think that Bacon *was* guilty (his italics) of corruption: that he had not the means of clearing himself; that the sentence pronounced against him, though severe, was not unjust; that his act moreover was not only in law indefensible, but in morals culpable, and more culpable in him than it would have been in another man; that he had, in short, allowed himself to do that which he knew ought not to be done. *To this extent he himself pleaded guilty and I plead guilty for him.*" (Our italics.)

Now these two statements—from a "Vindicator!"—are really rather startling, and one cannot but feel that it was fortunate for Spedding that Macaulay was not privileged to peruse them, for his comments might have necessitated a few more "Evenings with a Reviewer."

Of what use are excuses and extenuations in the face of such uncompromising and damaging admissions?

And it only seems to make matters worse when later (p.298) he seeks to show that "it was as a *Judge* only, not as a *gentleman* that Bacon transgressed."

He says, "we are apt to mix up with our feeling that the practice of receiving gifts of any kind was *corrupt* (which is true) a feeling that the practice of taking *money* was *ungentlemanly*, which is a mistake."

We doubt very much if this subtle distinction would have much weight with any modern admirer of Bacon. It was reserved for Dixon to show that not one of the many "admissions" is justified by the facts.

Extracts of this character from Spedding's book could be multiplied, one might almost say *ad nauseam*; certainly *ad misericordiam*, but it is felt that enough has been said, not only to justify our previous assertion, but to

show that this Work—though “parts of it are excellent”—is on the whole an exceedingly dangerous one for Baconians to quote or rely upon. However specious may be the “excuses” (and with these we do not propose to concern ourselves, as they do not appeal to us) the very admissions are enough to stultify any plea of innocence. Had Baconians no better evidence of Bacon’s integrity than that which Spedding furnishes, they would indeed be in a bad way.

It is sad to have to write thus of one whose life’s work it was to vindicate Bacon; all one can say is that he did his best with the materials available to him, and we honour him for his splendid motive and his indefatigable labours.

But we must not allow our feelings of admiration and respect for Spedding to blind us to the fact that it is to Dixon’s efforts that Bacon’s innocence has been made manifest, however his “frailties” may have been previously “extenuated.”

And this brings us to a question of some delicacy, namely how Dixon’s findings were viewed by Spedding. We have already seen that his “Evenings,” though written in 1845 was not published until 1881—36 years later, after his death. One wonders why.

G. S. Venables in his Preface to the work says: “The friends who at the time received copies of the book regretted with good reason Spedding’s resolution to postpone the publication; and he seems, after a long intervall to have discovered his mistake in suppressing his more compendious vindication of Bacon’s character.”

Venables writes earlier: “his vindication of the character of Bacon is, as he intended, complete and conclusive.” We can only leave it to the reader to judge of this for himself on the quotations furnished as samples from bulk.

That Spedding knew of Dixon’s “Essay,” with all its new matter, is clear from what has already been said; that he knew, also, of the later “Book” (1862) can only be judged inferentially from the fact that in his “Life and Times” his criticism of a certain passage in the “Essay” (omitted from the “Book”) is dropped out—

tains, as mentioned, a considerable amount of additional new matter having a most important bearing upon Spedding's conclusions.

So far as can be ascertained, Dixon's findings were not "acclaimed" by Spedding as one might, perhaps reasonably, have expected, seeing that their object was identical with his own. The footnote we have quoted shows that he *acknowledged* Dixon's researches, but we very much regret to have to say that it is doubtful if he *welcomed* them. Indeed, in a footnote at p. 484 of Vol I. of the "Life and Times" (which work contains but three indexed references to Dixon) he speaks somewhat slightly of certain inferences by Dixon concerning some guests at Bacon's wedding. This, coupled with the tone of his observations in his "Letters and Life" on the other matter to which reference has already been made, causes one—albeit reluctantly—to entertain a suspicion of professional jealousy.

One hesitates to suggest such a thing in the case of such a great man as Spedding, but human nature is imperfect even at its greatest, and it must not be forgotten that Spedding had given thirty years of his life to this great object.

It is strange that these important and far-reaching discoveries by Dixon should be accorded but three minor references in the two volumes of Spedding's "Life and Times" published long after Dixon's later book had appeared in 1862.

Be that as it may, we are not concerned with Spedding's feelings but with facts, as discovered by Dixon, and their vital bearing on the innocence or guilt of Francis Bacon.

Our present object is but to show that Spedding can only be accepted *pro tanto*, and that it is to Dixon that we must look for that full and detailed demonstration of innocence that alone can satisfy the needs of the case.

It is with this "nobler view" alone that Baconians are concerned, for it must be shown that Francis Bacon, as Lord Chancellor, was clean of hand and heart to justify Hallam's description of him as "the wisest and greatest of mankind."



## FRANCIS BACON AND THE ROSICRUCIANS.

By R. J. A. BUNNETT.

WITH reference to Mr. W. A. Vaughan's letter in *BACONIANA*, January, 1938, whatever Masons may affirm or deny, there is more than sufficient evidence in Mr. Alfred Dodd's "Shakespeare, Creator of Freemasonry," to prove conclusively that the founder of the Craft was "Shake-speare."

C. F. Nicolai (1743—1811), the German *littérateur*, claimed that Francis Bacon was the originator of modern Freemasonry, and that at the first authentic Lodge Meeting held at Warrington in 1646, at which all present were Rosicrucians, Elias Ashmole, being one of them, the New Atlantis was discussed, and Bacon's two pillars were adopted as symbols. "The Voyage to the Land of the Rosicrucians" of John Heydon (b. 1630), a notorious plagiarist—is, save for the alteration of a few names of places, a duplicate of the New Atlantis. De Quincey was of opinion that modern Masonry is modified Rosicrucianism, and that the latter, though emanating from abroad, never took root there as it did in England. It would seem that De Quincey was correct; and it is possible that Bacon, seeing the likelihood of divisions and deviations, made the Rose Croix the 33rd Ineffable Degree, the highest and most secret degree, the members forming a community of the most earnest and influential Christians in the Masonic ranks, the pinnacle as it were of the lower grades.

Though there is at present no *direct* evidence that Bacon was a Rosicrucian, or that he introduced the Order into his native land, or was in close touch with it on the Continent, there are nevertheless, numerous factors which point definitely to this conclusion. He himself, when abroad, may well have met members of the Secret Brotherhoods, who would appeal to his subtle mind, and he may have there and then planned to recreate the old Orders on a

fresh basis into a new secret Brotherhood united by Charity, i.e., Love. Anthony Bacon was, we know, wandering about the Continent from 1579-92, all the time in communication with his brother, and Francis had a number of agents in Europe. Rawley states that he had correspondence with foreigners, with whom he possessed extraordinary influence, and that many came from a great distance to gratify their desire to see him. It is a remarkable fact that so many of Bacon's most intimate friends spent so much of their time travelling, when to leave the country was a distinction, and subject to royal consent.

As we are aware, he contemplated vast ends, no less than a universal reformation in literature, science, philosophy and religion, and for this purpose secret methods were to be employed: "An Habit of Secrecy is both Politic and Moral," Bacon remarked; and "The Glory of God is to conceal a thing; the glory of the king to search it out," was a favourite saying. He declared that he had "reserved part of his publications for a 'private succession,'" which was doubtless the Secret Society which he formed and governed, and that there were two ways of publishing—one to acknowledge your works, and the other not to acknowledge. The enigmatical method was desirable he said "to remove the vulgar capacities from being admitted to the secrets of knowledge, and to reserve them to selected auditors, or wits of such sharpness as can pierce the veil."

There is no doubt that Bacon studied profoundly Indian, Arabian, Egyptian and other ancient philosophers and religious writers. In his "Commentaries" or "Transportata," (Br. Mus. M.S.) we find him maturing plans for depreciating "the philosophy of the Grecians with some better respect to the Egyptians, Persian, and Chaldees," and it was at the University that he took a dislike to the philosophy of Aristotle, finding it, says Dr. Rawley, "only strong for disputations and contentions, but barren of the production of works for the benefit of the life of man." Bacon commended Telesius of Cozenza, the follower of Empedocles, as "the last of the novelists."

continuous conflict and reciprocal action on the part of heat and cold, into a philosophy of strife and friendship,—so marked a feature of the plays and sonnets—Mars and Venus, dense and rare, heavy and light, which he calls “Keys of Works.” In the “Advancement of Learning,” Bacon says “To me it seemeth best to keep way with Antiquity usque ad aras”—to the very altars of the gods, where the divine drama of the “Rape of Proserpine” was enacted. Did he not out-top Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides?

It was the anonymous publication in 1614 of the “Fama Fraternitatis,” (or “A Discovery of the Fraternity of the most Laudable Order of the Rosy Cross”) and which was reprinted at Frankfurt next year with the “Confessio Fraternitatis” and the “Communis et Generalis Reformatio,” which first revealed the existence of the Rosicrucians. These works have a distinctly Baconian ring, and bear many traces of his mind and aims. The attitude of the “Fama Fraternitatis,” as regards the world and its learning was one of revolt against Aristotle and Galen, and against men of learning in general, because of their pride and covetousness. They were, it said, as a house divided against itself; but in union they might develop a perfect method of all the arts. In Bacon’s writings there are many hints indicating his belief in the efficiency of united effort, and we may note the opposition of the ‘Fama’ to Aristotle, which was one of the main objects of his system. The Fama tells the story of Christian Rosenkreutz that “high-illuminated man of God,” and “the chief and original of our Fraternity,” and how he had learned the lore of the East and was in possession of “true and infallible Axiomata out of all faculties, sciences, and arts” for the restoration of all things. “The high and noble spirit,” we learn, “of one of the fraternity was stirred up to enter into the scheme for a general reformation, and to travel away to the wise men of Arabia.” At this time the young member “was sixteen years old, and for one year he had pursued his course alone.” Have we not Francis Bacon here “going the same road as the ancients?” In the vault where the



body of the Founder was discovered, the 'Fama' informs us, was the Book T. which had at the end an "Eulogium," with the initials and descriptions of the 8 brethren, who then formed the Society. No. 4 is quoted as, *F.B. M.P.A. Pictor et Architectus.*" (M. probably = Magister)

The objects of the Fraternity appear to have been three-fold. 1. To purify religion and stimulate reform in the Church. 2. To promote and advance learning and science, and to extend man's knowledge of nature by experiment. 3. To mitigate the miseries of humanity, and to restore man to the original state of purity and happiness from which by sin he had fallen. Literature first and foremost was to be made the vehicle of reformation. These aims are identical with the reiterated statements of Bacon as to his own views and aspirations.

Recondite searchers as the Rosicrucians were, they sought the Wisdom of the East, and to discover the hidden mysteries of Art and Nature; they taught that two principles proceeded in the beginning from the Divine Father—light and darkness as 'form and idea': the good and the bad principles of the Zend-Avesta, Ormuzd and Ahriman: this is closely connected with the ideas of Bacon. He was strongly influenced by Paracelsus, and may well have been "the artist Elias," "who shall reveal many things," and whose coming the Swiss physician and naturalist foretold. Much of the philosophy of the Brotherhood was based on the writings of Paracelsus. The making "collections" or "dictionaries" was equally their object and Bacon's, who we believe organized a system of note-taking, collecting, "transporting", etc., by the aid of his "twenty young gentlemen," "his able pens."

The "Fama Fraternitatis" makes several references to a forthcoming 'Confession' of the Order, in which things omitted or briefly treated in the original manifesto were to be communicated with a certain fulness. "Thirty seven reasons of our purpose and intention" are given; and the whole work is substantially Baconian. The Bible, said the Confessio, was indeed the rule of life, the end of all studies and the compendium of the universal world, whilst the observation of nature and the knowledge of philosophy

were preferable to the tincture of metals. The work also has the notable statement that one of the "pseudo-chemists," to whom reference had been made, was "a stage-player" and "a man with sufficient ingenuity for imposition." The original Latin version calls him an "Amphitheatral Comedian." Amongst 52 rules laid down for the Brotherhood, it was stipulated that Rosicrucian works were not as a rule to be published under the real name of the author, and writings if carried about were to be in cipher. The Baconian parallel in this particular need not be stressed.

They were also to promote the building of "fair houses" for the advancement of learning and for the relief of sickness, distress, age or poverty. The extraordinary impetus given in Bacon's time to the building and endowing of libraries, schools, colleges, hospitals, alms-houses, theatres, etc., is noteworthy. When a Rosicrucian died, he was to be quietly and unostentatiously buried: his grave was either to lack a tombstone, or if one was erected, any inscription thereon was to be ambiguous. The idea was, no doubt, to prevent epitaphs claiming for the deceased brethren the authorship of works they did not originate. It is remarkable how many of the tombs of Bacon's friends, and of men of distinction of that period remain in one or other of the above conditions.

In the "Filum Labyrinthi sive Formula Inquisitionis" in which Bacon speaks to his sons—the Fraternity of which he was the 'father'—and beginning "Francis Bacon thought in this manner," he suggests the issue of "small tractates of some parts (of knowledge) that they have diligently meditated and laboured, which did invite men to ponder that which was invented, and to add and supply further." A vast number of such small tractates sprang up during Bacon's lifetime, and immediately after his death: for the most part they are extracts with commentaries from the works which Bacon himself had "invented." To cite one case only: A tract entitled "Clypeum Veritatis" or "The Shield of Truth" appeared in 1618, under the name of a certain pseudonymous Irenaeus Agnostus. This and the other works of the same writer,

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whose identity otherwise is quite unknown, are decidedly Baconian in style and diction. The author claims to be writing from Tunis, and to deal with everything which "hereunto has been set forth openly, either for or against the Most Honourable and Blessed Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross." The tract affirms that the highest good and way to the blessed life lies in the knowledge of God, and that the man who is devoted to the word of God is ever proceeding further in the quest of wisdom.

In the year following (1619) the Order's "unworthy German notary," as Agnostus called himself, issued "Fons Gratiae," the Fountain of Grace, which is a brief declaration concerning the precise time when Postulants might look for reception. The same year he produced an "indispensable advertisement to novices," exhorting them to persevere even to the end in faith towards God, the love of others, patience, and in their trust of the Order and its goodness. A little later Irenaeus published a "Rule of Life" for those who had not yet been received into the Order. His last work was a final revelation, discovery and apologia in respect of the most enlightened Order of the R.: C.:, and of its sincere and truthful confession. It is entitled "Epitimia Fraternitatis R.: C.:."

The rise of Rosicrucianism coincides with Bacon's life, and four years after his death, we find their literature already in decline: an enormous amount was published in Europe between 1613-30. Robert Fludd died at Bearsted in 1637 and does not appear to have produced any Rosicrucian work after 1629. No new stars appeared on the horizon until the time of Thomas Vaughan (1622-1665), and of John Heydon, the writings of the latter being published after the Restoration.

One of the most remarkable of Rosicrucian publications is "The Chemical Marriage (or Nuptials) of Christian Rosencreutz" (1616), an anonymous romance or vision which gives a full length account of a reception into the Greater Mysteries of Alchemy, presented as a dramatic pageant, in which the Founder of the Rosy Cross took part. The Rosicrucian manifestoes state that the Founder, the author of the "Chemical Marriage," was a boy of fifteen.



Bacon, we know, was of this age when he conceived the idea of inaugurating a new system for the advancement of knowledge, and for the benefit of humanity. Johann Valentin Andreae (1586-1654), the German writer, claimed (see "*Vita ab ipso Conscripta*") that he had written as his fourth work the "*Chemical Marriage*" when 16—17 years old (c.1602-3), describing it as a jest or '*ludibrium*.' There is strong evidence, however, that he was not the author, although Professor Böhle says that Andreae invented the Order, and that he also wrote the '*Fama*' and '*Confessio*.' Except for such a genius as Francis Bacon, the "*Chemical Marriage*" as a boyish effort is incredible. There is no question also that the House of the Holy Spirit, as the *Fama* testifies concerning it, was not built by Andreae.

Michael Maier (c. 1568-1622), a man of deep religious principles, published in 1618 his "*Themis Aurea*," the Golden Rule in question being the laws of the Fraternity. This was the last work in which he espoused the cause of the Brotherhood. Maier states that they are servants of the King of kings, and that religion is held by them at a higher value than anything else in the whole world: in the Book M., as in a glass and clearly, they behold the anatomy and idea of the whole universe. This Book is affirmed to comprehend "*the perfection of all arts*," beginning with the Heavens, and coming down to the inferior sciences. As custodians of their Mysteries, the Brethren are secret, true in their dealings, and for the rest, frugal, temperate and laborious, and they have always "*had one among them as a Head and Ruler, unto whom all are obedient*." In this work also he declared that the "*Communis et Generalis Reformatio*" (a Universal Reformation of the Whole Wide World) was not a Rosicrucian document, but was written by an Italian satirist, Trajano Boccalini (who was broken on the Wheel in 1613) and was bound up by the booksellers with the '*Fama*,—a frequent practice where small pamphlets were concerned. On the face of it the tract appears to be a travesty of reformation schemes; but there can be read into it the enigmatical interpretation so beloved of Francis Bacon.

It might be mentioned that some claim that the title 'Rosicrucian,' is derived from *ros*=dew, and *crux*=cross as a hieroglyphic of light, and not from *rosa*=a rose, and *crux*. A Rosicrucian philosopher was one who by the assistance of dew (alleged the most powerful solvent of gold) seeks for light, or the philosopher's stone. That no proper investigation had been made up to his day of the form and nature of light, Bacon considered "an astonishing piece of negligence."

There are many other points bringing him into a close connection with the Rosicrucians such that, even if the Brotherhood was not altogether an heir of his invention, Bacon was certainly an active member and promoter of their cause and objects.

## SEVENTEENTH CENTURY STUDIES:

PRESENTED TO SIR HERBERT GRIERSON. OXFORD CLARENDON PRESS. Price 21s.

**T**HIS collection of twenty-three essays, concerned with seventeenth century life and letters, has been prepared in honour of Sir Herbert Grierson who for more than forty years has occupied the Chairs of Literature at the Universities of Aberdeen and Edinburgh. Professor Geoffrey Bullough is responsible for one essay on "Bacon and the Defence of Learning" which is given first place in a volume covering a wide field of research and this is followed by another by Dr. Rudolph Metz (Heidelberg), whose subject is "Bacon's Part in the Intellectual Movement of his time." The translation from the German is the work of Joan Drever.

We may say at once that all Baconians, although Dr. Metz accuses them of filling the world with their hideous noise, should acquaint themselves with these essays because, whether the conclusions of their authors are justified or not, both contain the latest results of modern scholarship and investigation and in their respective methods both are brilliant vindications of Bacon's claim to one of the highest places in the intellectual life, not only of his own, but of succeeding time.

If we are concerned here mainly with statements which seem open to question and qualification, we must not be considered to be withholding the fullest tribute to what are, in their differing characteristics, two most valuable contributions to our knowledge of the life and time of Francis Bacon.

We part company with Professor Bullough in his second paragraph. "How characteristic of Bacon," the Professor exclaims, "that he was led to write the first formal presentation of his great scheme by motives more worldly than disinterested! So long as personal ambition was not concerned he had thrown out a few decisive sketches, a



few aphorisms (the *Essays* of 1597): it needed some hope of office to bring him to a Method."

We do not think the *Essays*, even in their earliest form, can justly be described as a few aphorisms: moreover it is clear that Bacon began early to prepare those carefully written papers on public affairs of which he wrote several. The first of any importance was the letter of advice to the Queen (1585) relating to the Roman Catholic political pretensions and the holding of these in check at home and abroad.

In 1589 there followed the remarkable paper on the "Controversies of the Church" and by the time Bacon was thirty-one the youthful essay which he called "the Greatest Birth of Time" at twenty-five began to fulfil its promise and we find him writing to Lord Burghley for assistance in that great task he had set himself, that which lay next to his heart—how really to know and to teach men to know.

Without power and without money he could not follow that path which he thought the only path worth following on earth—that "philanthropia" which was the character of God Himself and which was "so fixed," he writes, "in his mind as it cannot be removed." He sought power where power was to be found and there is no ground whatever for the suggestion that Bacon's desire for office was dictated by motives of self interest: that he was not a man to sacrifice his principles to the chance of promotion is shown by his attitude to the question of subsidies in the Parliament of 1593, when, although a candidate for the office of Attorney General, he opposed the wishes of the Government and, even when the Queen took offence, refused to withdraw what he had said in the House of Commons.

We do not agree that Bacon was primarily a man of the world and a courtier nor do we think that "the *Advancement*" was a popular exposition for men of the world: Professor Bullough's statement that its appeal was to lovers of action rather than of metaphysics needs much qualification. Bacon was anxious that men should think aright in order that they should rightly act. His claim to greatness is not that he first turned the minds of speculative

men from barren verbal disputes to the discovery of "fruitful" truth, nor can he be credited with those discoveries which since his time have been made by scientists who never read a line describing his particular method of Induction. It was by his denunciation of those faults which prevent men's attainment of Truth and by his insistence on the all importance of Facts that he has established himself as the Great Instaurator of all Arts and Sciences and has moved the intellects which have moved the world.

We are glad to follow Professor Bullough in his account of the background of "the Advancement"—Bacon's fear of a collapse of learning and his defence of it from the zeal and jealousy of divines, politicians, learned men themselves and the errors and vanities which intervened among their studies.

But it is probably with the author's references to the "School of Night" that readers of *BACONIANA* will be most interested, for here Bacon and Shakespeare are brought very near. Shakespeare in "Love's Labours Lost" mocks the intellectual arrogance, the pretended ascetism, the transcendentalism of the "School of Night." "I incline to believe," ventures Professor Bullough, "that Bacon did the same." "Shakespeare's interest in this play was in the general theme of active versus contemplative living" (Bradbrook. Berowne says "Learning is but an adjunct to ourselves and in the relationship between Bacon's "Gesta Grayorum" and "Love's Labours Lost" Professor Bullough sees no crossing of swords between the two greatest wits of the age, Shakespeare and Bacon, as does Miss Yates in her study of the comedy: rather Bacon's "Device on the Queen's day" suggests that if they drew swords at all it was in the same cause and may we add with the same hand?

Dr. Metz declares that after more than three hundred years Bacon's part in the intellectual movement of his time is as much disputed as is the importance of the philosophic and scientific point of view which he represented. An impressive array of authorities is cited to show that he is revered as a great creative spirit, one of the most comprehensive and many sided intellects of his day,

eminent as a man of letters, enlightened as a statesman and a most powerful influence upon the thought of his age. Leibniz, Voltaire, the French thinkers of the Enlightenment, the Encyclopaedists, Kant, Goethe, are a cloud of witness to the glory of Francis Bacon's genius. His eye is that of Jupiter's eagle; his wisdom is that of Minerva: his writings are a precious heirloom: his genius is one of those rare manifestations which make their appearance from time to time adorning both their own age and the spirit of humanity.

We are free to contend that the darker side of this magnificent picture is not nearly as impressive. Dr. Metz explains that lack of space prevents him from illustrating the unfavourable criticisms of Bacon with quotations. We think it much to be regretted that we must remain in ignorance of the identity of those who see Bacon as a man whose thoughts are completely imprisoned in the scholastic system of ideas—who think him subject to mediaeval tradition—who deny him merit as a philosopher and scientist.

He is dismissed, Dr. Metz writes, as a charlatan, a dilettante, a boaster and a pompous phrasemonger, by certain critics who see nothing genuine about Bacon: he is for them specious and theatrical, a mountebank and according to German opinion a creator of war-mindedness, a Machiavelli, greedy for power himself and a champion of British Imperialism.

Such authorities as are quoted as supporting this hostile attitude do not inspire very much confidence. With one exception they are all German and as compared with the remarkable contemporary tributes to the genius of Bacon as Poet and Philosopher and the modern pronouncements of those who speak with the knowledge of later times referred to by Dr. Metz make a very poor show indeed.

We should like to be able to consider in detail the estimate of Bacon's achievement formed by Dr. Metz in the light of present day research: in the main he is just to Bacon's name and memory—he is not concerned with Bacon's personal fate—and his estimate is a very high one: we wish there were space to quote it in full and need hardly



add that we commend this essay to the careful consideration of all Baconians: its perusal will not only enrich their knowledge of Bacon, but raise him higher, if this is possible, in their admiration and regard. "Love shall speak with greater knowledge and knowledge with dearer love."

But there is one matter in which we think Dr. Metz is quite wrong—Bacon's attitude to religion: it is clear to him that Bacon laid more stress upon philosophy or science than upon religion. We profoundly disagree. "Reason and conscience suffice" writes Bacon himself, "only to turn men away from vice": they cannot teach him his full duty, they cannot arrive at the highest laws of conduct. True philosophy refers not to exterior facts but to inward ideas: he knew that it rests not on outward perception but interior apprehensions. This is the axiom of all philosophy and Bacon assumes it when he makes wonder (*admiratio*) the beginning of philosophy: broken knowledge, knowledge as it were in embryo,—half made fragmentary knowledge. Let us take a step further. Goethe saw this Wonder as "Faith's dearest Child" *Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind*.

Unlike Kant, Bacon formed no psychology or metaphysic but he realises it is by inward vision alone do we know what is eternal and independent of individual life. Bacon also realised as all deep thinkers and truth seekers must that Love is a truth organ: to Love is revealed what no other eye either of Body or Mind can perceive. We wondered before we knew and must ever wonder again before we can know more.

Where philosophy ends religion begins. Religion should welcome all increase of natural knowledge because it leads to the greater glory of God and because it is a help against unbelief. "A little philosophy inclineth the mind to Atheism, but a further proceeding bringeth it back to Religion." To us the key to his complex nature and temperament lies in the fact that he was what is called a religious mystic. Hereditary influence upon his mother's side would have predisposed him to this. He knew himself to have undergone (as she did) some interior change. He called himself "nova creatura, a new creature to God."

If ever man "made his soul" Francis Bacon did and he was at the same time sure of God and uncertain of himself except of that Self which was in Him. His soul was a stranger in the course of his pilgrimage, but he had not oppressed the poor. He had hated all cruelty and hardness of heart. In a despised weed he had sought the good of all men. He had always sought it—through Burghley—through Essex—through James. God's creatures had been his books but His scriptures much more. He had sought God in courts, fields and gardens but had found Him in his Temples. "His heart had been a coal upon God's alter," and he writes "Ever as my worldly blessings were exalted secret darts from Thee have pierced me and when I have ascended before men I have descended in humiliation before Thee."

It is quite incredible that this is insincere. Francis Bacon is not speaking of God as a politician speaks. So far from setting learning free from the shackles of faith and secularizing it, Bacon's sense of the truth of religion was as real as his sense of the truth and greatness of nature: they were inseparable.

This is not the place to write of Bacon's association with those secret societies which, as Mr. A. E. Waite writes in his "Real History of the Rosacruzians" beaneath the broad tides of human history have flowed as a stealthy undercurrent, frequently determining in the depths changes that take place on the surface.

That such association there was we may be sure. To this day he is commemorated in the Temples with Paracelsus, Michael Maier, Jacob Boehme, Johann Andreas, Robert Fludd, John Dee, Sir Edward Kelly, Thomas Vaughan, Elias Ashmole and others who adored and manifested the Indwelling Glory of the Lord of Life and Light Who continues Knowledge from generation to generation.

We may perhaps conclude with Nietzsche "We do not know nearly enough about Lord Bacon, the first Realist in the most important meaning of the word to appreciate the extent of his achievement, his aim and the width of his experience."

FRANCIS E. C. HABGOOD.

## SHAKSPERE'S REAL LIFE STORY,

**W**ILLIAM SHAKSPERE was baptised on 26th April 1564 as the son of John Shakspere. It is not certain when or where he was born. John Shakspere was a tradesman, dealing in leather and probably farming in a small way.

It is not known whether William went to school. If he went to the Stratford Grammar School, there is no record of the fact. He must have been a remarkable pupil; yet no schoolmaster testifies that he noticed it. If he did go, he would have learned to read and write, and the elements of Latin. Sir Edmund Chambers says: "there would be little but Latin. . . . There is not likely to have been any Greek." It is not likely English was taught. The first English Grammar was not published until 1586. Of his handwriting six signatures alone remain: it is difficult to believe they are the work of anyone familiar with the use of a pen.

If he went to school, he left early: his first biographer, writing more than a century later, says at thirteen years of age, and that he was apprenticed to a butcher. Such stories of his youth as survive tell of his poaching, imprisonment and flight from Stratford. There is a local legend attached to "Shakspere's crab tree" which describes him as sleeping off beneath it the effects of a drinking competition with the village toppers of Bidford.

The records of Shakspere's marriage are inadequate and confused. At the age of eighteen he formed an intimacy with the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, Anne Hathaway, eight years older than himself. In November or December 1582, probably under compulsion of her relatives, he married her. A daughter was born in 1583 and twins in January 1585.

It is very doubtful when Shakspere arrived in London: tradition says that he was first employed as an ostler,



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taking care of horses outside the theatre, and afterwards as servitor or callboy inside it. According to Halliwell-Phillipps, he must at this time have been "all but destitute of polished accomplishments."

During the seven years following the birth of the twins, the life story of William Shakspeare is a complete blank. In 1593 he is recorded as having taken part in a performance by the Lord Chamberlain's company of players before Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich.

In the same year *Venus and Adonis* was published and dedicated to the Earl of Southampton by "William Shakespeare." The name of the author does not appear on the title-page. The dedication is no proof of his personal acquaintance with one of the most brilliant figures in the Queen's Court. Southampton never made any allusion to Shakspeare; there is no trace of any correspondence between them.

Until the year 1597 all the Shakespeare plays were published anonymously. Nothing is more remarkable than their perfect polish and urbanity. There is no trace of dialect. The principal characters are princes, nobles and young patricians, the creator of whom must have been in better company and enjoyed a wider outlook than can easily be believed attainable by an actor or a resident in a single city. (History of English Literature, Vol. 2. Garnett & Gosse.)

It is within the eleven years prior to 1597 that Shakspeare is supposed to have become the greatest poet and dramatist of all time.

In 1596 he is said to have lodged near the Bear Garden in Southwark, and in 1598 in the parish of St. Helens, Bishopsgate. He defaulted in payment of subsidies levied at both places, and thus these traces of his life in London are preserved. Virtually nothing more is known except that in 1598 and 1603 his name appears in the list of actors in two of Ben Jonson's plays. He apparently lived for some time with a hairdresser named Mountjoy. In 1604 he may have walked with others in a royal procession.

By 1597 he seems to have become a rich man. He

purchased New Place, Stratford, and added to it field by field. He engaged in petty lawsuits, lent money, and dealt in malt. He died in 1616 as a result, it is said, of the effects of a drinking bout.

The plays were attributed to "William Shakespeare" as having been written, revised or augmented by him, though many of them were not Shakespearean—whoever "Shakespeare" was. Shakspeare did nothing to discourage or prevent the practice of publishing as his own plays of which he was not the author.

The First Folio of 1623 is the only authority for attributing the plays to the Stratford Shakspeare. More than forty plays bore the name Shakespeare, but the editors selected as genuine only twenty-six. But the Folio included ten which had never before been printed, thus making up the total of thirty-six in the volume.

Six plays in the Folio had never been heard of before. Why did Shakspeare conceal them during his lifetime? Who made the extensive alterations, admittedly in the style of the true author, to many of the plays when they appeared in 1623, seven years after the death of the reputed author?

William Shakspeare made a will, but plays are not mentioned in it: his executors took no part in their publication. He left them without instruction, direction or obligation, while he bequeathed legacies of money, a sword, a silver gilt bowl and rings. These appeared to be more valuable than *Hamlet* or *Lear*.

There is no evidence that Shakspeare possessed a single book, letter or manuscript associated with a literary life. The most richly stored mind in the world occupied itself with agricultural pursuits and money lending, with drinking and wit combats. To his contemporaries, scholars, poets and dramatists, there is no evidence that he was personally known. He, the greatest of singers, died unsung. Was the Stratford man regarded as a genius, a poet, a great dramatist? No, but as an upstart beautified with the feathers of others, as a poor poet-ape, as "mouthing words that better wits had framed," as a "deserving man."

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Other references are to the works and not to the man. There is no proof that the actor Shakspeare was identified with the author Shakespeare. Praise of the works is no proof of the authorship.

There are records of some eighty performances of plays at Court between 1597 and 1616 by the company with which Shakspeare was associated, yet he is never mentioned by name, though Burbage and others were.

No one knows who erected the monument at Stratford. The original portrayed a repulsive figure grasping a sack. When the monument was restored, the sack was replaced by a cushion, and a pen was placed in the hand. The face bears no resemblance to the original: it resembles a mask.

There is not recorded of William Shakspeare one generous or lovable action. By questionable means he obtained the grant of a coat-of-arms. He was pertinacious in demanding repayment of money due to him. He did not, apparently, oppose the enclosure of common lands. He did not see that his daughter Judith was sufficiently educated to write her own name.

The Shakespeare of the Plays is not Shakspeare of Stratford, whose real life story has been told above.



## PRESS CORRESPONDENCE.

WITH the exception of the publication of *BACONIANA*, there is perhaps no more important work undertaken by the Bacon Society than the contributions by its members to the public Press all over the country—and sometimes overseas too. Whenever anything concerning Bacon or Shakespeare or the authorship controversy appears in a newspaper, the cutting is sent to several members who have agreed to write letters as promptly as possible, in order to rebut false accusations against Bacon, correct wrong impressions as to Baconian theories, point out the weakness of the orthodox standpoint, and generally to stimulate free discussion of all these matters.

It is a welcome sign of the times that in most cases editors will admit letters by Baconians, provided these are concise, pithy, and reasonable in tone. The big daily papers in London and other large cities are naturally less inclined to give much space to our subject, since other news is so plentiful; but in good class provincial papers there are often openings, and editors find that Baconian topics provoke lively and interesting letters from their readers. Accordingly it is right that our thanks should be given to those who have most frequently devoted both time and trouble to this valuable work. Without being invidious, we may mention Mr. Kendra Baker, Mr. R. L. Eagle, Mr. Howard Bridgewater, Mr. Francis E. C. Habgood, Mr. Rennie Barker, Mr. Henry Seymour, and the President.

In addition to this, on several occasions long articles, with catchy headlines, have appeared on some aspect of the authorship problem spontaneously and without Baconian provocation. Sometimes such articles are well informed, impartial and interestingly written; at other times they may be superficial, ill informed, and even flippant. But in either case there will almost always be

some remark or opinion which calls for comment and provides us with an opportunity of writing a judicious letter. In this way good discussions are initiated and much benefit done to our cause.

As an example of a bad article, mention might be made of a disgraceful attack on the Baconian theory by Sir Max Pemberton in a well known Daily. Several Baconians wrote strong yet temperate letters in protest, but all were excluded. Yet even here, "it's an ill wind that blows nobody good"; for this same article was commented on by one of our members in a communication to the *Grimsby Evening Telegraph*; and, to his credit, the editor not only published this in full, but gave space for many weeks to a full discussion of the subject both by Baconians and Stratfordians.

On another occasion a long correspondence took place in the *Surrey County Herald*, our side being well represented throughout. The same may be said of the *Western Morning News* and the *Northern Whig*, Belfast. *John o' London's Weekly* opened its columns for correspondence on the question of Genius as an explanation of the claim of Will Shakspeare to be considered the true author; and as we pen these lines the discussion is still proceeding.

The suggestion, originally made by Mr. R. L. Eagle, for opening Spenser's tomb, has naturally aroused widespread interest, and much prominence has been given to the subject in the Press. Another item of interest has been the recent publication of a book by Mr. R. M. Lucas, in which he revives the claim of William Stanley, Sixth Earl of Derby, to be the true "Shakespeare." Want of space forbids our reviewing this work separately, but while we fully appreciate the author's excellent anti-Stratfordian argument, his case for Derby appears to us unconvincing. Considerable notice has been taken of the book, and we wish Mr. Lucas—all the success he deserves!

From the above sketch of recent activities, it will be realised that this kind of work is of immense value in moulding public opinion and preparing the way for a general acceptance of Baconian theories.

B.G.T.

## AN ELIZABETHAN THEATRE.

By RENNIE BARKER

(Secretary, Bristol Shakespeare Society).

**I**T is a curious fact that no exact and reliable description or picture of the Elizabethan stage has survived.

Some fifty years ago, a drawing of the Swan Theatre was published by a German, but apart from this drawing and two pictures of the theatres at Ghent, 1539, and at Antwerp, 1561, we have to turn to other sources for information.

We can, however, construct for ourselves a good picture from the plays and casual utterances of contemporary writers, and still more from the Diary of one Philip Henslowe, an important theatrical manager and pawn-broker who has been aptly named a usurious old rogue. This forerunner of the modern capitalist advanced money to the ever needy dramatists on plays still in the making. Most important of all, the sly old Elizabethan leased the theatres he had built to the players' companies. Shakespeare was in the Lord Chamberlain's Company.

Practically all these theatres were built outside the boundaries of the city because the City authorities often complained about the brawling and disturbances caused by the theatre audiences. The famous Globe theatre, where Burbage was the star actor, was erected on the south bank of the river. Thomas Platter, a Swiss, who visited England in 1599, wrote of the building as "the house with the thatched roof."

The enterprising Henslowe, seeing that the Lord Chamberlain's company had left the district north of the city, now built a new uncovered playhouse, the "Fortune." The contract, drawn up in January, 1600, shows that a carpenter, Peter Streete, was responsible for its building, which was estimated to cost £440, but actually £80 more was spent before it was finished. £800 was paid for the

land: this was a very large sum, representing about £6,000 to-day.

The Fortune, situated between Golden Lane and Whitecross Street, Cripplegate, in the parish of Finsbury, took about eight months to complete and was probably opened in the autumn by the Lord Admiral's company with Dekker's *Fortune's Tennis*. Its upkeep was very expensive, for roughly £120 was spent yearly between 1602-8, and as much as £232 in 1604 in repairs.

About 2,000 people would be able to watch a play at the theatre, which was square in shape; 80 ft. by 80 ft. outside. The stage consisted of the apron platform, four feet high, that extended half way into the pit, an inner stage, which could be curtained off, and a balcony above. Over the stage was a roof supported by four square pillars. This roof was known as the 'heavens' and underneath it was kept a "state" (king's chair) that could be lowered and raised by means of a strong wire. Actors who were often gymnasts (and dancers, too) would arrive on the platform at times "by flight" from the heavens using a wire which could hardly be seen.

In the platform was a large trap door that opened into a big cellar where the props were stored. This hole in the stage was graphically termed "hell" and from it were "erupted" such props as tombs, a steeple, a wall, a beacon and a tantalus tree. Hamlet's ghost, it will be remembered, roamed here in the scene where the young Hamlet swears his friends to secrecy.

Galleries, three stories high, on the three sides provided accommodation for the greater number of spectators who consisted chiefly of merchant men, gentlemen and "society." The pit had no seats and here the groundlings stood packed together so tightly (a penny, admission) that on occasions juniper berries were burnt in a tub to keep down the smell.

There was a sign outside the theatre. Heywood, in his *English Traveller*, 1633, wrote:—

"A statue in the forefront of your house,  
For ever like the picture of Dame Fortune  
Before the Fortune Playhouse."





THE FORTUNE THEATRE.

(SCALE MODEL MADE BY MR. RENNIE BARKER.)



Unfortunately the theatre shared the same fate as the Globe Theatre; it was burnt down.

Sir John Chamberlain wrote to his friend, Sir Dudley Carlton, in December, 1621:—"On Sunday night, here was a great fire at the Fortune in Golding Lane, the fairest playhouse in this town. It was quite burnt down in two hours, and all their apparel and play books lost, whereby these poor companies are quite undone."

## THE ANNUAL BIRTHDAY DINNER.

The Bacon Society's Annual Birthday Commemoration Dinner took place at the Langham Hotel, Portland Place, W., on Tuesday, the 25th January 1938, and was attended by a large and distinguished company.

The President was supported by the Chairman and members of the Council and the guests included Mrs. Muriel Grant, Mr. Robert Atkins, and Captain Roy Lambert.

The Loyal Toast having been duly honoured, the President proposed "the Immortal Memory of Francis Bacon," saying that he thought it might be useful if he referred to some common objections to the Baconian theory. He pointed out that the difference in style between the acknowledged writing of Bacon and of the Shakespeare plays was not nearly so great as was imagined and was largely accounted for by the difference of subject matter which, of course, involved different treatment. Moreover Bacon's versatility was phenomenal; he could and did write in a dozen different styles with the greatest ease. There was not only the testimony of contemporaries that he was a great poet, but his own confession that he was a concealed one. It was obvious, too, that he was a master of the art of playwriting and of stagecraft, both in theory and in practice.

It had been claimed by their opponents that traces of the Warwickshire dialect could be found in the plays, but out of some five hundred so-called Warwickshire words, it had been shown that all but forty-six were in use in other counties; of these forty-six which were peculiar to Warwickshire, not one was to be found in Shakespeare!

Mr. F. E. C. Habgood, proposing the toast of the "Bacon Society," said that its story was very like, in many ways, the story of that great man whose life and memory they were commemorating that evening. Like him, it had its early struggles to win recognition for its claims and, like him, its members had often met the reward of the truth seeker and pioneer—indifference, and in some cases scorn and contempt.

But he thought the Society might fairly claim that its objects had won some measure of recognition. People were much more respectful to the memory of Bacon and to the claims made for it, and there was little doubt that the confidence of the orthodox had been shaken in some directions, although this was rarely admitted. Recent biographies were not nearly as cocksure as they were—the word "doubtless" no longer appeared with such distressing regularity to dignify very doubtful conclusions from more than doubtful premisses. The last word of orthodox Shakespearian scholarship was, as regards Shakespeare's biography, now admitted by Sir E. K. Chambers the most authoritative of Stratfordian biographers to be nescience.

Baconians were no longer *all* insane—it was even possible to urge Baconian arguments without being accused of being a crank, an ignoramus, or a thief of the laurels from the brow of a dead Christ.

Looking at one or two of the books that had appeared since he last had the pleasure of proposing the toast of the Society a year ago, Mr. Habgood said perhaps the most interesting was that of



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Dr. Leslie Hotson. It was called "I William Shakespeare do appoint Thomas Russell, Esq." By his will, William appointed Thomas Russell to be his overseer, and his duty appeared to have been to see that the Trustees could themselves be trusted. The book was the story of this Thomas Russell, and was an extraordinary mixture of fact and of surmise. Needless to say, the link between William and the Russell family was not forged. It proved another missing link; but the author, in his own words, had brought Shakespeare within an interesting distance of Francis Bacon, for the link to which Dr. Hotson referred was an intimacy between this Thomas Russell and Sir Toby Matthew. Russell was set upon and arrested for debt by "a pack of pewter buttoned, shoulder clapping, catch poles"—in such an irreverent way he described the sergeants-at-mace—while in the company of Sir Toby himself.

The book was one more example of the necessity of research upon another than the Stratfordian basis—freedom from the Stratfordian pre-occupation.

He wished there was some way in which they could appeal to those engaged in the work of research—as Dr. Hotson says "Now is not the time to cry finis to this"—to remember that it was just possible they might be wrong—that whether William wrote Shakespeare or not was at least an open question—that the First Folio was not really the ark of the covenant and that the fire of heaven would not necessarily annihilate those who laid irreverent hands upon the claims of Messrs. Ben Jonson, Heminge and Condell and the rest.

But it seemed too much to hope that the foolish process of creating imaginary Shakespeares would stop. The good work of creating him in their own images had been carried on by the authors of "The Road to Illyria" which he thought would have been more appropriately described as "The Road to Illusion." The two authors sought to paint a convincing portrait of the man Shakespeare. No attempt was made to square the Shakespeare of the plays with the William of tradition.

The new popular biography proceeded in this way.

William meets Florio. His whole nature bursts into flower—he falls in love—a happy love. Poor Anne! or Agnes! Hathaway or Whateley! Florio introduces William to the Earl of Southampton, for the paths of William and Southampton *must* have crossed somewhere. William is then enslaved by the dark lady. The sonnets have to be accounted for. He is then betrayed, but it is not at all clear by whom. Anyway he loses faith in love and life—this process is called "the Journey to the Phoenix"—and he enters the valley of the shadow. This part of the book is appropriately enough called "The Inferno." This horrid journey is taken just when William's bank balance looks really healthy for the first time; when he seems to be getting the money-lending malster business well on its legs at New Place. Then there is the final break with Southampton. This is referred to as "the sunset" and "nightfall" and with it, on page 140, comes "the tempest of Shakespeare's soul" when he descends for some reason into hell. He must have done this because the murder of Duncan shows that a storm had been raised in his spiritual world. He is so angry and storm tossed that he grows quite cross with the Queen and refuses to

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celebrate her death in matchless verse, probably because he was too busy buying tithes.

The death of Essex had driven him to frenzy and so he wrote "Julius Caesar," and the rest of the plays of the tragic period. A titanic outburst of fury followed. In 1607 his brother Edmund died and this helped to infuriate William. In the next year, fortunately for him, his mother passed on, which seemed to restore him to a kindlier mood and his life was worth living again because the plays of reconciliation must be attributed to this time if he had to die in 1616.

The effect of the death of his relatives upon a great poet was peculiar, but no less peculiar than the birth of a grand-daughter. For the birth of a granddaughter put God in his heaven again for Shakespeare and all was right with the world once more. That was why he wrote "The Tempest." Someone had been very ungrateful because he had written "Lear" and "Timon" in the meantime, but they were not told who this was and could only conjecture it was some unfortunate debtor of his whom he had to sue for money lent. He had also suffered from sex mania because his plays struck an ever sharpening note of hysteria upon the love of woman.

After another little fit of jealousy in "The Winter's Tale" and seven or eight years of lofty contempt for humanity he wins right through into a brave new world, is re-born into a new life—to account for the "Phoenix and the Turtle"—(this seems a little difficult somehow to apply to William)—forgives Southampton who is now out of the Tower—lives with an ideal love as the phoenix was re-born from its ashes—and falls into worship of Judith, his daughter, a queer object of adoration, who apparently was not taught to write to her father telling him how much she loved him.

Then he grows ecstatic over the Arabian Bird—Imogen—his Ideal Woman; reads the Bible devoutly and dies, not as the result of a drinking bout, but in the odour of sanctity. Everything is forgiven—it would be strange not to forgive and be forgiven—that is the message of the last plays—William is made one with Nature "cursed be he who moves my bones." This section of the book is called "the Re-Birth of love" in an erudite weekly.

"Leaving no posterity,  
'Twas not their infirmity  
It was married chastity."

Well, William the Conqueror did come before Richard III with the citizen's wife, but little difficulties of this kind were not, it seems, to trouble travellers on the "Road to Illyria."

He had not misrepresented this extra-ordinary biographical method by which the life-story of a writer was told in what he writes, by which one inexplicable mystery was substituted for another and by which an hypothesis was set up which created one insoluble difficulty after another.

This, however, was what orthodox literary criticism had told them was a contribution to their understanding of Shakespeare's mind and art, welcome to general reader and to scholar alike.

In proposing the toast of the continued vitality and success of the Bacon Society and of its individual members Mr. Habgood expressed the hope that it might long enjoy the follies and fallacies of the orthodox and of those who sat in high places in the academies of learning and of vested interest.

Mr. Valentine Smith, Chairman of the Council, responding, said that they owed the formation of the Bacon Society to the very learned, able and energetic Mrs. Henry Pott. Genius had been defined as the infinite capacity for taking pains; and, if that were correct, Mrs. Pott was a genius, as her editing of Bacon's "Promus" proved. The object of her work was to show that while hundreds of the entries in Bacon's *Commonplace Book* were apparently unused in the preparation of Bacon's acknowledged works, they appeared in the Shakespeare plays. Mrs. Pott had scrutinised many hundreds of these identities and carefully examined about six thousand works published before or contemporaneously with Bacon's own life and time. Mrs. Pott was the moving spirit in starting *BACONIANA*, the Society's organ, which had been regularly issued for fifty-three years with only one exception, that of the year 1918, when, owing to difficulties created by the War, it had to cease publication.

A controversial movement generally passed through three phases, those of persecution, abuse and ridicule, and finally acceptance. The originators of the Bacon theory were not free from persecution as the case of Delia Bacon showed. It was not surprising that her mind finally gave way. This was probably due to the strain of poverty, mental stress, estrangement and public indifference. A great many worthy people had died in lunatic asylums who believed that William Shakspeare wrote the plays, and a great many others had ended their lives there who had never heard of either Bacon or Shakspeare. After all, for anyone to go out of his mind implied that he had a mind to go out of. It was sometimes forgotten that the first book ever written in defence of Shakspeare against the assaults of Delia Bacon and William Henry Smith, another Baconian pioneer, was the work of one George Townsend of London, published in 1857. He subsequently became crazy and committed suicide. The speaker thought the Baconian movement had reached the second phase, but since the war, abuse had subsided and their claims were given a fair hearing. This was principally due to the work that many devoted members of the Society had done in the cause.

The Council had recently endeavoured to restore the quarterly publication of *BACONIANA*; this journal had for long been the only avenue available in which to contradict the inaccuracies which appeared from time to time in the press. In the past, space had far too often been unfairly refused to a reply to the claims of the orthodox advocates. *BACONIANA* also provided an opportunity of acquainting the public of the Society's meetings in Prince Henry's Room, Fleet Street, to which there was free admission and the fullest discussion was invited.

The Council had approached the Dean of Westminster with the object of obtaining permission for the opening of the tomb of Edmund Spenser. At his funeral all the known poets of the period were present. They had composed poems in honour of his memory and, it was said, had cast these with their pens into the open grave. There might be an original manuscript poem of Shakespeare among them, and he would have thought, in view of the scarcity of specimens of his handwriting, Shakespearian scholars would have approved of the course suggested, but little support was forthcoming

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from that quarter. Perhaps discretion was the better part of valour.

The Society had also endeavoured to counteract the unfair reflections on Bacon's character by issuing a leaflet entitled "An appeal for justice," of which large numbers of copies had circulated all over the country. He hoped that these had done something to counteract the libels so assiduously propagated in schools and elsewhere upon the name of the greatest Englishman who ever lived.

The health of "the Visitors" was proposed by Miss Mabel Sennett, and Mrs. Grant and Mr. Robert Atkins responded on their behalf. Mr. Atkins pleaded for a simpler presentation of the Shakespeare Plays on the stage: their chief appeal, he said, lay in the glorious verse which however there were few modern players who could speak. He urged members of the Society in the words of Shakespeare himself, "On Bacons! On!"



## REVIEWS.

I, WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, DO APPOINT THOMAS RUSSELL, ESQUIRE.  
By Leslie Hotson, Professor of English in Haverford College;  
Jonathan Cape.

Dr. Leslie Hotson, on leave of absence from Pennsylvania, U.S.A., has been exploring the manuscript riches of England and he has certainly shown that now is no time to write *finis* to any Elizabethan subject, even to the most canvassed topic of all, Shakespeare's biography.

Research in the Public Record Office, the British Museum, the Bodleian Libraries and the Department of Literary Inquiry at Somerset House has resulted in this account of Thomas Russell, the overseeing executor of William Shakspeare's Will. We find that the circle in which Russell moved included Sir Tobie Matthew "the brilliant man to whom Francis Bacon sent his 'Essays,' his 'Instauratio Magna' and his 'De Sapientia Veterum'" for criticism and whom he called "my alter ego; so good and dear a friend."

Sir Tobie's brilliant intellect, "likely for learning, for memory, for sharpness of wit and sweetness of behaviour" appears to have endeared him to Bacon. When he turned Jesuit we find Bacon entreating him "to meditate upon the effect of superstition and receive himself back from courses of perdition."

Dr. Hotson writes that he thus uncovers a link which brings Shakespeare within an interesting distance of Francis Bacon and, perhaps it is well that he leaves others to speculate upon its possible implications. It is much to be regretted that the author's probing and detective work to which tribute must be paid should not have prevented him from repeating the silly slander that Bacon was a false friend who turned on Essex and dragged him down at his trial, pocketing £1,200 as a *douceur* for doing so. We can only express astonishment that any writer can, on one page, write such nonsense and, upon another, quote Jonson's eulogy of one who "by his work appeared one of the greatest men and most worthy of admiration that had been in many ages."

"Eager hearts, quickened with the wine of poetry who stream along the pilgrims' way to Stratford" will find little to cheer them in Dr. Hotson's book, for his association of Thomas Russell with Shakspeare of Stratford is nowhere established. There is nothing except the single reference in the Will; the rest is conjecture, presumption and surmise. Indeed the author himself sighs for "two lines of Shakspeare devoted to his friend's character," though he must "conclude that their minds and dispositions were congenial." They saw eye to eye in more matters than Cotswold sport: they both had friends at Court: neither was ambitious: both found happiness in the country, retiring to ever-varied occupations and pleasures." These are not in William's case specified. No doubt it is better so. "Both left borough and county business to

others, both preferring to wag beards over friendly whiffing cup in talk than to push the fretful quill"—certainly in his retirement Shakspeare found no pleasure in this. Dr. Hotson says both Thomas and William cared for the things that really matter instead: we will not suggest malting, money lending, enclosing common land and purchasing tithes.

Well, "if you look in the maps of the 'orld you shall find, in the comparisons between Macedon and Monmouth, that the situations are both alike. There is a river in Macedon; and there is also more-over a river at Monmouth."

The pilgrims had best "touch (sic) the plays once more beside the Avon and between whiles refresh themselves among the roses of New Place."

**SHAKESPEARE BIOGRAPHY AND OTHER PAPERS CHIEFLY ELIZABETHAN.** By Felix E. Schelling, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.

Dr. Schelling is, we believe, a great American teacher and, according to the publishers' announcement, his wide scholarship, his cool and convincing wit, his distinguishing literary style, combine to make this a book of refreshing quality and a valuable addition to Shakespeare criticism. We really wish we could think so.

Biography is indeed a diverse and difficult art and, as Dr. Schelling tells us, to the proper equipment of the biographer a complete acquaintance with all of the material concerning his subject is a *sine qua non*. "The discovery of fact, the classification and labelling of material, is not biography. Dates, the records of birth, death, marriage, publication are only material with which to construct biographical edifices as this, that or the other architect in lives may be at pains to erect." The architects of lives of the Stratford Shakspeare seem to have been little more than jerry builders and, although the discovery of fact, date and records have certainly not troubled them, they have indeed shaken themselves magnificently free even of tradition when it cannot be filled into the blue print of their biographical edifices. Dr. Schelling points out the shortcomings of Winstanley, Nicholas Rowe and Dr. Johnson (he is very severe with Frank Harris whose Shakespeare has always seemed as good as any other Shakespeare constructed out of the plays ascribed to him), reaching the conclusion that a contemporary who has known the man personally and lived with him is your only true biographer.

If this is so, we must lament the silence of Richard Quiney and of John a Combe or their lack of qualifications as William's biographers. We are very glad indeed Dr. Schelling turned aside from the temptation to perpetrate another full length life of William Shakespeare, not that we doubt his complete acquaintance with all of the material concerning his subject, although we have permitted ourselves to wonder whether he is completely acquainted with, let us say Sir George Greenwood's work "Is there a Shakespeare Problem?" Dr. Schelling's conclusion in his Chapters entitled "A Negative of Shakespeare" and "Shakesperean Orthodoxy" are so curious as to invite us to devote to them a page or two in some future issue of *BACONIANA*. Here is one—"Bacon's flattery of King James reads like blasphemy and makes you wonder for which

(sic) to feel the greater contempt, the man who could concoct such a dose or the man who could swallow it."

Who shall say that unconscious humour is not without a place as another refreshing quality in this "valuable addition, etc?" "The biography of Shakespeare has been written, re-written and miswritten to a frazzle," writes Dr. Schelling, "yet Shakespeare the man is transparent and inscrutable": he will remain so while he is sought in Stratford.

**SHAKESPEARE'S YOUNG LOVERS.** The Alexander Lectures at the University of Toronto, 1935. By Elmer Edgar Stoll. Oxford University Press.

These are gay and charming subjects and to Professor Stoll's lucid chapters on "Romeo and Juliet" and the young people of the early comedies and dramatic romances, lovers of Shakespeare may return again and again. The life of many of us and the best of it too is a dream, and that is true, writes Professor Stoll, pre-eminently of a poet. His biography when it is fairly and honestly written, not extracted and re-constructed from his poems, is generally meagre and often but an irrelevant commentary upon them. His life not his biography, a different and often a contrary thing, is in them. This may be true in part, but the Imagination is dependent upon, indeed is a part of his Personality, and what a poet imagines depends upon his own nature, his experience, environment and hereditary influences. Though the Imagination may fly around and around the Personality to apparently incredible distances, as Professor Masson wrote, like a sea bird around a rock, it is still tied to the rock by invisible attachments. If this were not so, different poets would sing the same tune. And this is true also of the Dramatist. He is, as far as his creation is concerned, the supreme Disposer of events, sole Providence and Judge. We can note how he exercises his power: learn how and why he thinks things happen, his philosophy of life and thus of himself. Nature, wrote Dr. Johnson, gives no man knowledge and when images are collected by study and experience can only assist in combining or applying them. Shakespeare, however favoured by Nature, could only impart what he had learned. Every human creation must express its author's personality. Those who believe otherwise of Shakespeare do so because of the apparent detachment between the man as they conceive him and his work and circumstances. Shakespeare's own personality evades them because they create him in the Stratford shape out of their own imagining. That is why the learned Professor asks, almost wistfully, whether Shakespeare—the poet laureate of love—learned all he knew of it through Anne of Shottery and the Siren of the City.

**JAMES I.** By Charles Williams. Arthur Barker Ltd. Price 10s. net.

This new biography of James I claims our sympathy for a much criticised and misunderstood monarch. He is described as a twisted shape of greatness; a strange mixture of weakness and strength; a conceited metaphysical intellectual, but withal a tolerant lover of men if not of mankind; a figure of tragic mirth.

Francis Bacon is said to have fulsomely praised this "wise fool of Christendom," and another of his admirers seems to have been

John Donne. It is not easy to despise a man thus honoured, and certainly this book justifies to some extent a higher estimate of James Stuart's character than he has received at the hands of many historians. The book throws a new light on Bacon's part in the Trial of the Earl of Essex. The author points out that Bacon was blamed as a result of the opinion that a constitutional action on the part of the Earl had been punished as treason. It was held by many authorities that seizure of the King's Person was not necessarily rebellion against him, and the question raised in the Essex Trial was whether or not the Earl intended the dethronement and death of the Queen. Bacon, having accepted office under the Crown, was of course compelled to accept the views of the Crown lawyers and had to support this in Court; Justice was a part of the Royal Prerogative; it was the Queen's justice which was administered in her Courts, and a trial so-called was little more than a statement and public justification of decisions which she and her ministers had reached.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE EDITORS OF BACONIANA.

Dear Sirs,—Referring to Mrs. Prescott's comments on James Howell's *Familiar Letters* on page 50 of the January issue, it is unfortunate that printers' errors in some of the dates were not discovered and corrected. May I mention that the letter in question appears in the 1st edition of 1640, the 2nd edition of 1650, and the 3rd edition of 1655. In the 1st the letter is undated, in the 2nd it bears date 6th January 1625, and in the 3rd the same.

With regard to these letters in general, the D.N.B. says: "They run from 1 Apr. 1617 to 28 Dec. 1654. All dated between 26 Mar. 1643 and 9 Aug. 1648 profess to have been written from the Fleet. Throughout the dates are frequently impossible . . . The letters are all from Howell to other persons, and it is obvious that, if genuine, they were printed from copies of the originals preserved by Howell . . . If the letters were genuine, one would moreover expect to find some of the original manuscripts in the archives of the families to members of which they were addressed, but practically none are known . . . But the 'familiar epistles' as a whole, although of much autobiographic interest, cannot rank high as an historical authority."

Yours truly,  
BERTRAM G. THEOBALD.



## NOTES AND NOTICES.

Our readers will be aware that, owing to the death of Canon Foxley Norris, former Dean of Westminster, the question of obtaining permission to open Spenser's tomb, had to be delayed. Recently, however, the Society approached the newly appointed Dean with this suggestion, and intimating that if he wished it, a small deputation would wait upon him in order to discuss the matter. In response to this, a courteous reply was received from Dean de Labilliere as follows:

March 4th 1938.

Dear Sir,

*Edmund Spenser's Tomb.*

Many thanks for your letter of March 4th. I am afraid that I know nothing about the letter which your Society addressed to my predecessor on 20th July 1937, but the subject which you raise is one which interests me greatly. Indeed I was talking to Sir Charles Peers about it only last week. I certainly should not be opposed to the suggestion which you put forward, but before undertaking to approach the King for permission to open the tomb, I should need to take further advice. Perhaps a little later on, when we are settled in the Deanery (which will not, I fear, be until the middle or end of April) a couple of members of your Society would be good enough to come and discuss the matter with me informally.

Yours truly,

PAUL DE LABILLIERE, Dean.

Bertram G. Theobald, Esq.

We may mention that Sir Charles Peers is the Surveyor to Westminster Abbey. From the above it will be seen that there are good hopes of success in gaining the permission we desire; and in the event of any action being taken, the Press will no doubt keep our readers well informed!

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The "Birthday Play" at Stratford-on-Avon Memorial Theatre is *Henry the Eighth*. It will be performed on April 23rd which, however, there is little reason to suppose was William Shakspeare's birthday. There is even less reason to suppose that he wrote *Henry the Eighth*. On the contrary there are circumstances which indicate that the play as printed in the First Folio was not written before 1622 and that Francis Bacon was its author.

Orthodox Shakespearian commentators have never known what to do with this play. Some deny to William Shakspeare any share in it. Many assign parts of it to him but disagree among themselves as to which bear his image and superscription: some give the whole to Fletcher: some divide it between him and Massinger.

Yet in 1622 Chamberlain reports that Bacon had "lately set forth two books with promise of more which lack of leisure had prevented him from reading." "But," added the writer, "if the Life of Henry VIII which they say he is about might come out after his own manner, I should find time and means to read it."

How did this enterprise of Bacon's mature? Nothing came of it except a fragment published posthumously in 1629 which, according to Dr. Rawley, represented but one morning's work. The mountain in labour once more appeared to have given birth only to a mouse. But in the next year last among the Histories in the Folio was *King Henry the Eighth*. Prince Charles had asked Bacon to write the story of Henry's reign. Why should he have done so if Shakspeare of Stratford had written it so well? "Shakespeare" chronicled the English Kings from Richard II to Henry VIII, omitting only Henry VII. Bacon had written the history of this reign in prose and the beginning follows in unbroken narrative from the end of Richard III. The end of Bacon's *Henry VII* is a natural introduction to "Shakespeare's" *Henry VIII*.

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The internal evidence also points to the Baconian authorship. The fall of Wolsey is an episode in many ways analogous to that of Bacon himself. The fallen Cardinal and the fallen Chancellor lament in the same strain. The prophetic speech of Cranmer at the christening of the baby Elizabeth strongly resembles a section of Bacon's *Henry VII* and of his "Felicities."

The familiar line of Wolsey's about ambition "By that sin fell the angels" finds a parallel in Bacon's essay "Of Goodness and the Goodness of Nature" "The desire of power in excess caused the angels to fall." More important is the close analogy which the scene presents to the circumstances of Bacon's own fall and his state of mind after it, as revealed in his correspondence. This scene may well have been written after that event.

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Scenes of the play are laid in places with which Bacon was familiar—York House always associated in Bacon's heart with poignant memories. "There I first breathed," he wrote: there his father died: there he hoped to die too, but this was not to be. He bought it in days of his worldly success. After his fall it was torn from him by Buckingham.

"Shakespeare" makes Cardinal Wolsey entertain the King there: gentlemen in the play describe the Queen's procession there: one calls it York Place and another corrects him "Since the Cardinal fell, that title's lost." "'Tis lately altered," his companion replies, "the old name is fresh about me."

When Wolsey was deprived of the Great Seal, two peers were sent to take it from him. It is remarkable that in *Henry VIII*, although the names are given accurately, two are added to the number and these two are two of the four who when Bacon fell were sent to him for the same purpose.

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In Act V Cranmer is discovered awaiting an audience with the King. The former's humiliation has been shown as similar to an indignity Bacon suffered at the hands of Buckingham. According to Macaulay on two successive days Bacon repaired to Bucking-

ham's house and there (like Cranmer) he was suffered to remain in an ante-chamber among footboys, seated on an old wooden box with the Great Seal of England at his side.

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The following is an extract from "Time," a Chicago publication, dated 7th February, 1938. It will certainly not be without interest to Baconians.

"If a genuine scrap of Shakespeare's handwriting were found, it should interest everybody but Baconians. For years scholars have known only seven authentic specimens of his signature, three of them in his will. Last fortnight in Salt Lake City, Professor Benjamin Roland Lewis displayed a small piece of paper cut or torn from an old document, with a common contemporary spelling of the bard's name—William Shakspeare—plainly written across it. For 19 months Professor Lewis pored over his find. Chemical analysis proved to his satisfaction that the ink was Elizabethan. Microscopic study put the paper in the same period. Photographic enlargements permitted minute comparisons with known Shakespearean signatures. Ultra-violet photographs established the type of pen used: infra-red photographs showed no tracings beneath the ink. Shakespeare himself, said Professor Lewis, wrote that name. But where the paper came from, who owned it, how it reached Salt Lake City, what happened to the rest of the document, he could not or would not say."

We have not hitherto associated Salt Lake City with interest in Elizabethan literature. Its title to fame has rested upon very different foundations. A new prophet, however, appears to have arisen there for the comfort and inspiration of the Stratford faithful who, if another signature of their William had really been discovered, would doubtless think the fight o'er and the battle done. Unfortunately, however, the relic, like so many others, seems to be of rather doubtful authenticity and its source seems at least as mysterious as the many fragments of the True Cross, the coals upon which St. Lawrence was burned and the eternal roses which were presented by the Heavenly Messenger to the Virgin Martyr Dorothy.

Professor Lewis seems to have subjected the small piece of paper to rigorous and even ruthless tests, but as he intends to maintain silence with regard to it, I am afraid Baconians will think the Professor's 19 months chemical analysis, microscopic study, photographic enlargements and ultra-violet and infra-red photographs only love's labour lost.

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We confess we should like to know more of this wonderful discovery. Here is a signature of William Shakspeare; in which of the many varieties of his name is it spelt? What, if anything, connects it with the Divine William? What was the deed from which it was cut? Between what parties was this made? And when? And what was its effect? Which of the various hand-writings put out for William's autograph does this new one resemble? Is it an old man's, or a young man's or is the signature peradventure that of another lawyer's clerk? Has the passage of three centuries affected it, presuming Professor Lewis' processes have left it in the state in which it reached him? We wonder



whether the writer was like Shakspeare "In perfect health and memory, God be praised." And we may be permitted to wonder whether the discoverer was too.

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We understand that the C. W. Daniel Co., Ltd., of 40, Great Russell Street, W.C.1, will shortly be publishing a book by Mr. H. Kendra Baker, whose name is already familiar to our readers. The book is entitled *Elizabeth and Sixtus: A Seventeenth Century Sidelight on the Spanish Armada*, price 7s. 6d.

It is based on the disclosures of a certain Italian historian Gregorio Leti (sometime historiographer to the Court of Charles II), who, in 1693, produced his *Historia di Elizabetha Regina d'Inghilterra* in Italian, this being the first Life of Elizabeth by well over a century. It is stated to have been compiled from original material in the Library of the Earl of Anglesey. Certain secret relations between the Queen and Pope Sixtus V in connection with Philip's attack upon England are dealt with in detail, and are of a very remarkable character, throwing, as they do, an entirely new light on Elizabeth's preparedness for the Armada.



## LECTURES.

At the monthly meetings of the Society at Prince Henry's Room, Fleet Street, London, the following Lectures have recently been given:

6th Jan., 1938: "Links between Shakespeare and Ireland," by Miss Sennett.

3rd Feb., 1938: "A plea for Moderation," by Mr. Howard Bridge-water.

3rd March, 1938: Annual General Meeting, followed by informal talk.

7th Apr., 1938: "Breaking new ground," by Mr. A. E. Loosley.

On 2nd February, a lecture was given under the auspices of the Royal Society of Medicine (History of Medicine Section) at the Society's premises, 1, Wimpole Street, London, by Dr. H. P. Bayon, his subject being "William Gilbert (1544-1603), Robert Fludd (1574-1637), and William Harvey (1578-1657), as Medical Exponents of Baconian Doctrine." By kind invitation of Dr. Hubert J. Norman, Secretary of this Section, the President of the Bacon Society was present, and contributed a few remarks to the discussion which followed the lecture. The lecturer gave a most interesting account of the relations of these great contemporaries of Francis Bacon, while doing full justice to Bacon's own work. In conversation, it transpired that Dr. Norman was himself a convinced Baconian! This only shows how many Baconians there are still in hiding, who have not yet joined our Society! We shall do our best to remedy that state of affairs.

On 26th February, the President gave a lecture entitled "Shaks-pere the Mask, Bacon the Man" to the "John o' London's Literary Circle," at Kingsway Hall (Oak Room), London, the chair being taken by Mr. William Kent, a learned and delightful author of many books, mostly connected with London and its history. The chairman frankly admitted that on the authorship of Shakespeare he was a sceptic, but did not commit himself more precisely. In spite of very bad weather there was a full attendance and the audience displayed keen interest in the lecture. Short speeches and plentiful questions followed. There was no serious opposition, no scoffing at Baconian ideas, and a friendliness of attitude which contributed much to the enjoyment of all concerned.

On 15th March, by arrangement with Mr. Valentine Smith, the President gave an address to a Boys' School, St. Joseph's Academy, Lee Terrace, Blackheath, London. A large class of the senior boys listened with keen attention to the lecture; after which, the presiding master asked them to give three cheers for the speaker, to show that their lungs were all right even if their brains were not! This they did with a will. However, it is only fair to say that several of them did ask intelligent questions, which is all one can expect,

considering the subject was so new to them. The staff were likewise much interested, one of them admitting frankly that he was amazed at the weight of evidence in favour of the Baconian theory. A judicious distribution of literature, and an invitation to attend some of our lectures at Prince Henry's Room will no doubt produce good results.

In January last, at Liverpool, Mr. Alfred Dodd gave a lecture to the Liverpool Collegiate Old Boys' Masonic Research Association, his subject being "Freemasonry, Shakespeare and Francis Bacon." There was a large attendance and Dr. Balfour Williams was in the chair. Great interest was aroused, and many questions asked. One P.M. said he was quite prepared to accept the position outlined by Mr. Dodd, and others said they now saw the Masonic and Shakespeare problems in a new light.

On 17th March Mr. Dodd lectured to "The Belfry," a mystical society whose headquarters are in London, and whose syllabus of lectures is a very interesting one. His subject was "William Shakespeare and Francis Bacon."

On 19th February Mr. Rennie Barker, a Bristol member of the Bacon Society, lectured at the Clifton Arts Club. He has made a special study of the stage used in Elizabethan times, and has constructed working models in order to illustrate his explanations of the manner in which plays were produced in those days. This is an excellent idea which might well be utilised in other directions.